Winter Break Laboratory Activity Reduction

You have the list and you’re checking it twice.

The following is a routine list of questions to guide winter break laboratory activity reduction.

Pre-planning Activities. Have you:

- Identified all activities that can be reduced, and identified personnel able to safely perform on-going activities?
- Developed procedures for safely temporarily reducing research? This includes securing chemical, biological, and radioactive materials. The procedures must be reviewed with the laboratory personnel and readily available to them.
- Identified freezers, refrigerators, and critical research equipment and ensure the equipment is plugged into emergency electrical outlets? Emergency electrical outlets are usually red and provide power during an outage.
- Developed a plan for contacting laboratory staff during an activity reduction?

Activity Reduction Activities. Have you:

- Confirmed the emergency numbers posted for the laboratory are correct and up-to-date?
- Stored, properly labeled, and secured all containers of chemical, radioactive, and biohazardous materials?
- Stored incompatible materials separately?
- Closed the sash on chemical fume hoods?
- Arranged for disposal of hazardous waste materials, including any unknowns (free of charge)?
- Secured compressed gas cylinders and closed gas valves?
- Reviewed proper shut down procedures and measures to prevent surging if working with electrical equipment?
- Turned off heat-generating equipment (e.g., hot plates, stir plates, ovens) and nonessential electrical devices?
- Checked that refrigerator, freezer, and incubator doors are tightly closed?
- Exited the laboratory and locked the door?

Resuming Laboratory Operations after a Activity Reduction

- Inspect work areas for equipment malfunctions, fires, damages, or hazardous material release. If you discover a condition that poses a threat to you or to others, such as a fire or a hazardous material release, isolate the hazard (e.g., close the door to the lab), notify occupants in the area, exit the building, and call Protective Services at 966-5555.
- Check specialty laboratory equipment. Do not use laboratory equipment, such as a chemical fume hood or biological safety cabinet that is alarming or not working properly. Call Facilities for service at 966-4496.
- Flush test all eyewashes/safety showers and check the pressure of fire extinguishers in the area.
- Check equipment that may have been affected by a power disruption. Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed until temperature levels return to normal.